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A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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SELF-CARE, AND CARE FOR OTHERS.

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."—PHIL. ii., 4.

There are two great principles which run through society; and all true prosperity in the individual and in society at large depends upon the coöperation of these seemingly antagonistic principles. The first is that of personal responsibility, and the second is that of social sympathy and social liability. Every man is bound by the law of his being to seek his own good, primarily. Every man is bound by the law of his higher being to seek the good of others by that primary good which he has secured for himself. When it is commanded, therefore, that every man should "~~Mind~~ his own business, working with his hands the thing that is good," we are not to say, "That is just what I always thought: let everybody take care of himself, and then the world will all be taken care of." For the apostle says, ~~afterward~~, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the the things of others."

'Ah!" say some, "which of these is true?" Ah! say I, both of them. They are both principles fundamental and fruitful; but they are principles which, like diœcius trees, that, carrying the male blossoms on one tree, and the female blossoms on the other, require contiguity and interaction before the fruit can come.

It is only by taking care of one's own self thoroughly, and then just as thoroughly taking care of others' selves by that force which you have in yourself, that you can act consistently and harmoniously with the law of your own being—with the law of your own social habitation.

Every man, then, must have a primary care for himself, and for his own affairs. Every man must see to it that his own body is maintained in health. Every man must see, therefore, that it has food and warmth and raiment and shelter—that it has, in short, all those things which are necessary for a well-developed bodily condition.

Every man also should secure to himself a prosperity in his own

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affairs. Every man is in charge, first of certain things which belong to him in especial, which he is to think of, more than anybody else; which he is to think of before he thinks of anything else, and to discharge before he discharges any other duty. There are certain great primary duties that we owe to ourselves, of existence, and of sustenance, and of accumulation, mental, social and physical. We are to store up being, and we are to store up resources, and we are to store up strength, and affluence, wealth, if possible. Taking care of one's own central and individual self is good. It is right. It is the very preparation for a true benevolence.

It is dangerous to relax the responsibility of this self-care, even in charity. Next to the danger of not relieving those that are in need, is the danger of doing it. If you do not relieve those that are in great need, you yourself suffer. It is a bad thing for a man to shut up his heart. It is a bad thing for a man to form the habit of not communicating with those that are in necessity. It is better for a man, though he is oftentimes deceived in the objects of his charity, to let the stream run so that it shall not be choked up nor obstructed. But next to the damage which you do to yourself by not being charitable, is the damage which you are liable to do to others by being charitable. It is the most dangerous thing in the world to help a man. So that you help him in a way to make him more powerful to take care of himself, succor is no mischief. But the charity which men administer, for the most part, is so administered as to relieve the object of it in some degree of the pressure of this great law which rests on every man to take of himself. It is the most dangerous thing that you can do, to cut the cord of self-responsibility, and to make men feel that they can be helped; that they do not need to exert themselves; that there are no thorns against which they will fall if they are indolent. The pressure of God's providence and God's law is to make men stand up independently and take care of themselves, and when they fail by sickness, weakness and overthrow, still to administer to them succor. It is one of the most delicate things in the world, so to succor men as not to destroy them. Of course, there will be a residuum in a household, or in a community, that are past self-help; and they are the true objects of charity. And yet, even among the sick and poor there should be a spirit of self-reliance cherished assiduously. For when a man has no idea of taking care of himself, he lacks the very essential element of manhood. We are to bring up our children in this way. We are to bring them up so that they shall have self-respect; so that they shall have a spirit of care. But of this more, further on.

This primary regard for our own existence, and for our own

prosperity, is not, however, the only principle which is at work, and which we have to take time to consult. We are not solitary in this life. We are social. Although our neighbors are not in one sense a part of ourselves, as our separate members or limbs are a part of our body; yet, in another sense they are a part of us. It would be impossible for a man to live in solitude, and exercise all the faculties of his mind. Many of our faculties imply correlated existences; and we could not employ them and develop them if we were shut off from all society. Our association with others is a condition of education; it is a condition of development; it is a condition of happiness. Therefore it is that to attempt to reform men who have been criminals by shutting them off from society, is to attempt to reform them by denying them one of the fundamental laws of their structure and of God's administration. It is unnatural, barbarous, pernicious!

We have duties to others, as much as to ourselves. We are as much bound to take care of others as to take care of ourselves. In the sphere of benevolence, we are to look first to our own development and strengthening; and then we are just as really, though perhaps not in as great a degree in all cases, to look to the development and strengthening of others. The law is, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." *As*, there, does not carry the force of quantity, but of quality. Our affection for our neighbors is to be as disinterested and as real as our affection for ourselves. That which we give to them is not to be a low and empty feeling. It is to be large and generous—the same as the love that we give to ourselves. It is not meant that we are to think as much for our neighbors as for ourselves; but we are to love our neighbors, all of them; and our affection for them is to be as disinterested as that affection which we feel toward our own selves.

This doctrine does not allow men to neglect their affairs for the sake of pretentious benevolence. There are many who seek a fugitive excitement; who seek praise, perhaps; who indulge a patronizing pride, it may be, in a perpetual attempt to take care of everybody *but* themselves. They may be appointed as father and mother in the household; and then their sphere is there, and there they must serve God, and there they must serve society. He who rears and cares for a Christian household is laboring for an institution than which society has none more precious and more necessary.

But there are many who reverse the order. Your duty is first to your household; and then so much of strength and time as you have after your duty to your household is performed, is to be given to the community. You are to begin with those next to you; and

gradually the sphere is to grow larger and larger. That is the natural order. But there are many who first take care of the community, and then go home with the scraps of their time and take care of the family. There are many who are seized with an infernal spirit of usefulness. They are not well spoken of by the apostle. He calls them "Busy-bodies in other men's matters." Persons, they are, who are incessantly running hither and thither. They rise early and sit up late, that they may attend to this or that matter of public interest. They lay aside home duties for the sake of performing duties that are outside of home. They are too much occupied with the affairs of some church or some society to commune with their children. There is no quiet, no rest, with them. For there is this visit to make, or that committee to meet. They are working for the community. They are like shuttles, incessantly carrying busy-bodies' thread, up and down, back and forth, from side to side. They are smitten, as they think, by duty.

Now, there is no such thing as this encouraged in the word of God; and no man can say, "Look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others," and make that an excuse for neglecting home duties. Whatever else you neglect, do not neglect self, and the branching of self into the household. That is normal. That is the very road to benevolence. Take care of home. Make home strong, beautiful, rich, happy; and then let home overflow. Blessed are they who get the light, and the example, the succor which come from a home-heart filled up with the measure of duty, and that then, in the strength that it has derived from home as a center, radiates and carries intelligence and sympathy and succor to those who need it outside. First gain power at home. Be stronger there than anywhere else. Be more faithful there than anywhere else. Make home, as it were, an armory. Make it as a heavenly garden. And then take the fruit and the flowers that you have raised there, and bear them forth to those that are outside. So you will have something to carry that will be worth carrying.

Still less is it the spirit of this injunction to look after others' welfare and not our own simply, when properly rendered, to encourage impertinent prying, and curiosity, and meddling, and advice-giving in the affairs of others. There are many persons who are atmospheric popes. They in some sense distribute themselves like a malaria over the whole community. They go everywhere, looking after somebody or other. It is not that they are wiser or better than others; but they seem to have an insane notion that they must see everything that is out of order, and make suggestions here,

and give advice there, and made inquiry yonder. They run from one to another, with incessant clatter, offering advice which is cheap to give, but dear to take. And they fill up the round of their useless lives in this meddlesome spirit. God abhors them, and the devil loves them. Mischief-makers they are—inevitable mischief-makers.

Let men give succor when succor calls. Let men give counsel sparingly, even when counsel is asked. Let men intrude nothing of themselves upon those who do not need intrusion. All prying impertinences; all officious inquests; all walkings up and down with a kind of authority among men, as if you were better than they, or competent to instruct them—these things are foreign, I will not say to Christianity alone, but to common sense, on which all true Christianity must be built.

The two principles of self-care, and benevolence, or care of others, where they are coördinated, work together in perfect harmony. Each restrains the other. Each makes the other fruitful. A wise care for one's self makes it necessary that you should think for others. You cannot take care of yourself wisely without it. A wise sympathy for others' affairs can be most profitably shown by those who have first taken care of themselves. If you desire to be benevolent, you must look on your own affairs. If you desire to be thorough in your own affairs, you must look on others' affairs. Do both. Take care of individual duty, and also of social duty. Let them be coördinated, and work together. Neither can go alone. They are reciprocal. They are auxiliaries one of the other. No man can be so busy, ordinarily, that he has not some time to think of other people. Because there are some people who are continually running up and down through the community and thinking only of others' affairs, is no reason why you should go to the opposite extreme, and never think of others' affairs. Because some persons are all the time running after committees, and sewing circles, and consultation meetings, and visitations, and their footsteps are rarer on their own threshold than on others', is no reason why you should be a nun or a monk. Their mistake does not justify yours. Their extreme does not justify your rebound to the other extreme. There is to be temperateness on one side and on the other. You are to care for others; and yet you are not to care for others to such a degree that you shall neglect to care for yourself. You are to care for yourself; and yet not to such a degree that you shall neglect to care for others. No man is selfish whose benevolence promotes his own interest. No man is wise in self-interest who does not make his prosperity that of others.

We may examine this truth briefly in its relations to individuals, to neighborhoods, to sections of a country and to nations; and I propose to examine it in every one of these points.

I. In regard to the individual. While every man should mind his own business shrewdly and skillfully, he should not do it exclusively and selfishly. The man who thinks only of himself, cheats himself. He narrows his sphere. He prevents the development in himself of those sympathies which are like quills in the wing. He weakens his power, on the whole, though he may intensify his power in special things. Exclusive thought of yourself, and of your own plans, and your own prosperity, will at last produce friction, and collision, and rivalry, and opposition. And a man finds his way growing harder and harder, the more selfish he is. If a man makes his prosperity always work for the good of his neighbors, at last when it is found out that he is seeking others' welfare as well as his own, all men want him to advance, and they help him, and reward him; but when a man lives simply for himself, when a man is nothing but a magnified augur, and is cutting into the substance of the community, boring his way steadily and by force, the further he goes in, the harder it is for him to turn round. Friction and opposition meet him at every step. And selfishness at last receives its own punishment. No man is more cheated than the selfish man. Selfishness takes away much enjoyment, and finally wrecks men in old age. And often when they are successful in outward things, and endowed with prosperity, they are unhappy. Nothing is more common than to see men who have succeeded in the ambition of power or wealth discontented.

In old age many men begin, in an awkward and mechanical way, to practice acts of generosity without being generous, and acts of kindness without being kind. These traits should be carried along with a man's business, if they are to exist in his disposition at the close of a business career. But many a man makes his business as hard as iron. Every part of his plan is law. And while he is engaged in accumulating wealth, and his mind is keyed up with an ambition to become richer, he experiences a measure of satisfaction. But after he has achieved prosperity, and got a million, or two millions, or three millions, he begins to say, "Ah! what is the end of it?" A man very soon comes to the end of all the money that he can use with any profit. Then comes the simple ambition of acquiring money; and that is very thin and vaporous. And the man says, "Is it not time for me to begin to enjoy my wealth?" He wants to enjoy it. And sometimes he seeks to get comfort out

of it by making a posthumous bequest, saying, "I will hold on to it as long as I can; but I will take comfort from the thought that I have provided in my will for the erection of that building." Others in old age begin to bestow their goods to feed the poor; and if they give them in generosity they will enjoy more at the end of life than they did at the beginning; but after men have trained themselves to a selfish method of administering their wealth, that selfishness has taken hold of them, and all that they give away is only another form of selfishness, so far as they themselves are concerned. The community may derive benefit from it, but they will not be much benefited by it.

It is very dangerous for a man to think only of himself—very dangerous, I mean, to *him*. You may prosper outwardly; but what means prosperity in this world? It means a home made happy. It means the education of the whole being. It means the building a man up so that he has enjoyment in all parts of his nature in its proper force. If a man limits his thoughts to himself, he seals up all the cells from which honey is to come. There are few faculties that are not dead in him. And when he comes to old age, he may have a few branches that have green leaves on them, but the tree at large is dead, and so is fruitless.

I see men in New York (none in Brooklyn!) who are repeating, with golden bricks, the old story which is told of an Italian noble. It is said that he placed a woman in a little niche just large enough for her to stand in, and that by the masons a row of bricks was laid, and that thus begun, a wall encircling her rose steadily up, and up, until finally, when the last brick was laid, she was left standing in her living tomb. It is a horrible story. Very likely it is true; for they sought horror ingeniously then. But it is not half as horrible as what I see going on in New York perpetually. New York men take golden bricks, and lay a circle round them, and the wall rises, first up to their knees, and then up to their breast; and then up to their neck, leaving their head peering above the golden bricks. And little by little, circle by circle, the wall still rises, until by and by there is only a small orifice above their head. And at last the top brick is laid on, and that orifice is closed, and the man smothers behind his golden bricks. All the man that was in him is dead.

We hear some of these men faintly cry out, murmuring. They have thought of themselves until there is only that one single chord that sounds in them. And there is not one of God's angels in heaven, nor in all the distribution of spirits through the air, that loves to play on one chord, and that selfihness. There is no music in it. It makes a good bass when a man raises a whole scale above it; but alone it is harsh and stridulous.

A wise benevolence should proceed from a good solid center. You should take care of yourself. You should be an organized business man; but you should be an organized *man* anyhow. Your own self should be made strong and sharp and active; for you are to build a foundation on which you can get leverage. You are to create, round about you, you yourself, as it were, being an anvil and forge, that which you shall use in a higher sphere for beneficence. First, self. That is the lowest foundation. But you stand on it. And by and by sympathy and benevolence will begin to expand; and you will have something by which to go into the sphere of helpfulness and activity to others.

The apostle, therefore, speaking of the lazy man that stole, says:

"Let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

That is the object of working for yourself. Take care of yourself, and then you will have something to give to other folks. That is the motive for working for yourself.

A benevolent squandering, therefore, brings frugality to contempt. As there are those who are "busy-bodies in other men's matters" socially, so we frequently see in society persons who practice a kind of indiscriminate, unwise, unorganized, profligate benevolence. We see persons who take no care of their business; who do not keep any proportion between capital and receipt; who are careless of watchfulness and frugality. They are too kind. They trust every one. They cannot collect that which is due to them. They are so busy with others' business that their own business suffers. That is not true benevolence. It is a squandering of benevolence. Every man's center should be a working center where the law of sympathy resides. Every man should be strong in himself; every man should be fully equipped; and then when he goes into the sphere and work of benevolence he is worth something. Otherwise, he is careless, smiling, aimless, tottling. A man that lets everything slip through his fingers—what purpose does he serve, in running through his little means, but to set an example which stingy men plead for their stinginess? Do they not point at him, and say, "There is one of your benevolent men! When I began business in this town, that man was one of the most prosperous men in the village; and now where is he? What is benevolence worth?" They deride it. But this is benevolence run mad. It is not true benevolence.

There is truth, therefore, in the proverb, "Charity begins at home," whether it begins at the store or at the house. A man that gives away all his seed-corn in the spring will beg in the autumn. A

man that gives away all his time and strength outside of home will have no home. A man that gives away all his time and strength outside of his business affairs will very soon be bankrupt or thriftless. And it ought to be understood that the condition of power in benevolence is that it shall come by a man's taking care of himself. And then it should be understood (and with emphasis, too) that when a man has become strong by taking care of himself, he shall use his power for the benefit of his fellow men. When a man has become rich in substance, let him employ that substance for some purpose of good to others. God says to rich men, "Be rich in good works." If you have organized wealth, use it; and the law of using it is the law of social sympathy and the law of benevolence.

2. This law of self-care and of care for others, coördinate and harmonious, is indispensable to the prosperity of a neighborhood. Every man should have his own center, and his own private success. Independence is a matter which should be bred in us by religion and by the whole instruction of the household. We ought to bring up our children to ask as little as possible, and to give as much as possible. We ought to bring up our children to depend upon their own resources, and never to ask a question if they can find out by teasing their own brains; and never to let any question go unsolved, when, if they cannot solve it themselves, they can get it solved by asking questions. Ask, but ask as little as possible, should be the rule. We ought to bring up our children to despise charity, except that which comes out of their own hands. Take nothing from any man if you can avoid it. Be high-minded. Even service of a personal kind be not too ready to receive. Give an equivalent for all that you receive. Deal with others, not in a spirit of bargaining, but in the spirit of honorable pride. There is such a thing as Christian honor; and there is nothing about which it should be more sensitive than this of receiving from others that which you should have the power yourself to originate or to take. Bring up your children to be cheerful, to be brave, to be prosperous, having no other thought of life but this: "That which I can gain myself I will gain; but that which I cannot gain I will do without. I can afford to be poor, but I cannot afford to be a pauper." There is a law of manhood which is more important than all the external adjuvants of life; and it is our business to make this felt more. You can scarcely intensify it too much.

But if you teach this only to your children, you will teach them to be hard and stingy and unhappy. You must go further than that. For when you have made them independent, self-reliant, industrious, enterprising, fruitful, safe, you must teach them that they are not to use all their life-force upon themselves, but that their neighbors, and the

neighborhood, whether it be a country neighborhood, or a village, or a town, or city, are to be benefitted by it. Teach them to do in a larger sphere what they have done in a smaller. Benevolence must be combined with private integrity, and private industry. The consideration of public welfare should be a part, then, of the attention which our children should receive at home, and a part, also, of the instruction which they should receive in the church. In every community there are elements of great moment to each citizen which yet do not come exactly within the sphere of any one man's duty. There are besides the things which each man does for himself, and within his own house, and within his own grounds, many things which are common to all; and the right-doing of things which are common to all, is what we mean by *public spirit.*

Now, every man should cheerfully and gratefully—not grudgingly—work for the community in which he lives. It is a shame for a man to have a good farm and a bad road in front of it. It is a shame for a man to have beautiful grounds and an opaque fence surrounding them. It is a shame for a man to stay at home and rear his own prosperity there, and encircle himself with beautp and affluence, saying, "I am provided for, and I do not care for others. Things may go up or down, for all of me. I am independent of the town in which I live." You are a part of it; and it belongs to you to help build it up, and not to build up yourself within your own lines exclusively. There are many persons who feel that what the town gets from them is so much that they have lost. It is not so. It is so much that they have gained, rather. There are many men who are apparently so selfish and so self-seeking and so centripetal that they begrudge their taxes, the service that they are called upon to render in the working of the roads, and every thing that they do, or have to do, for the public. I think that they are mad when they see their neighbors' bees going off thigh-loaded from their flowers. I think that if they could, they would conceal the perfume from their grape-vines in summer when they are in blossom, so inclined are they to shirk from doing anything for the welfare of others.

It is the business of every man to see to it that the whole neighborhood or community in which he dwells is wholesome. Is there malaria springing from some undrained morass in the neighborhood? All the people should come together, according to their several abilities, and take hold of hands, and labor as one man to secure the general health. And if a man is lifted up on some hill so that he is beyond the reach of danger, it is a shame for him to say, "The air is pure here; it is healthy here: if you down there are sick from malaria, drain your own swamps. Why should I drain them?"

Because, you ought to work for the public good as well as for your own. A man who dwells upon a hill, and will not go down and help his neighbors under such circumstances, is not half a man—and it is the worst half, at that. There are men who see travelers go past their premises day after day, weary and worn; and yet they will not spend five dollars to set out shade trees on either side of the road. They say, "If travelers want shade-trees, let them set them out themselves." It would be a revolution for rich men to propose a park, or a common ground, for the people at large. The rich man says, "I have all the grounds that I want." Well, provide grounds for the poor, then. "Oh! The poor must take care of themselves. I am not going to take care of all the poor in the community."

People disown their obligations to the commonwealth; and yet, they are just as important, and they are just as binding, and they are on a higher plane, or in a higher sphere, than their obligations to themselves. I have justified you, I have defended you in taking care of yourselves; and now I charge upon you, also, that you are just as much bound, with a higher moral obligation (that is, with an obligation which is higher in quality), to take care of others as well as yourselves.

It is a shame for a village to be treeless, and to be without ample accommodations both for foot-passengers and for beasts. It is a shame for a village to let stinginess prevent the securing of ample supplies of water for all. They that are best off in regard to all the conditions which are required for health in a community should be first and foremost in providing them for the whole community. God has raised them up, and taken the necessity of these things from them. Let them, therefore, with a large disinterestedness, secure them to those who need them.

I recollect the story of a man who spent his whole life in making money for the sake of doing good with it. I admire his noble ambition, but I do not justify the mode which he adopted for carrying it out. He was very industrious, and amassed a great deal of money. He had the reputation of being avaricious and stingy. And yet, when he died it was found that his whole life had been dedicated to accumulating property that he might build an acqueduct that should bear the water of a stream from a distant mountain, and empty it for evermore into a fountain in a village, so that the poor, who had always suffered from lack of water, should be supplied with it. And then he became a benefactor. And after his death people cried who had cursed him while living.

Every man is to be praised for performing a generous act; but no man has a right to do a good thing in a stingy and ugly way.

This man was not justified in the course he pursued; but to devote his whole life to procuring the means of supplying the wants of future generations, was a noble thing in him.

In general, there are a few in every community who are obliged to do the things which are for the common good. The work of a church is done by a dozen, or half-dozen. They work excessively—more than they ought to. The rest all lie still and let them. That which is done in any church, if distributed evenly among the members according to their several capacities and measures, would be light upon all. Yea, it might be multiplied four-fold and yet be light upon all. The money which is given in this church for charitable purposes, if divided among all that are here, in proportion to their means, would scarcely be recognized or felt. It might be doubled and quintupled, and still it would not be felt, if the burden were evenly distributed—if men felt that they were under obligation, not simply to take care of themselves, but to take care of others also, as a part of their duty to God and to humanity.

Hence, not only the wickedness but the folly of men who grudge contributions to the public. I do not know as I ought to speak on this subject, because it will really hit the sins of people in Brooklyn! There are, I am told, men in Brooklyn who do not like to pay their taxes. I am told that they evade. I am told that they pay their taxes very grudgingly. I am told that they hide property. I am told that they depreciate the value of property in the eyes of those who are to assess them. I am told that they even tell lies—which I cannot believe! But there are men who make it a study how to get their shoulder out from under that part of the burden which consists in caring for the community. If a man could justify himself for this by a sufficient reason, there might be some extenuation; but there is no such reason. A man may say, "I do not think it right for me to pay for all the rumshops that exist throughout the community. I do not think that I ought to be taxed for gambling-saloons, and all manner of license, and vice, and crime. I do not think that I, who am a hard-working, painstaking, virtuous man, and a member of the church withal, ought to bear the burden of this great debt which is caused by bad men." But that is the law of life, and always has been, and always will be. Good folks have to pay for the wrongs committed by the bad. Therefore, a man cannot justify himself on that ground. A man might say, "I would pay my taxes cheerfully if I thought that what I paid went to benefit the community; but when I think that the greatest portion of it goes to feed a parcel of base cormorants, I do begrudge it." Well, I give it up: that is a justifying reason. If I thought that every gold arrow

that I shot hit the mark, I would be willing to shoot many out of my quiver; but when I think that about five parts out of ten go to feed stealing selfishness, I myself grumble a little, and feel that it is rather hard. I curse that selfishness which is perpetually making good men, even, unwilling to be public-spirited. I denounce that whole system of laxity of conscience, in the administration of the affairs in the community, which men practice, and which you tolerate almost without murmur or reproach, and which acts back upon the whole moral sense, and leaves men still, like moths, to eat the thread of the commonwealth.

One of the abominations of public dishonesties is, not so much that they take away money, as that they take away manhood; as that they take away conscience; as that they take away public spirit, and quash and destroy it.

The curse of charity, to-day, at my door, is that I think every other man, yes, that four out of five, are impostors. My hand does not want to go out as once it did, because so much of charity is but paying a premium on vice and impudence.

The curse of public-spiritedness is that men do not believe that the money which they pay for taxes, and for charity itself, goes to make the park beautiful, or the streets light, or the sewers wholesome, or the community wise and good and strong, in schools and other civic institutions. But you, and I, and everybody, owe it to ourselves not to draw back from our duty. It is better to give a thousand dollars where only five hundred are due, than to form an intense selfishness which shall lead you to say, "Let the community go: I will take care of myself."

3. This subject should also be applied to the sections of the country in which we live. The necessity is beginning to appear. It has shown itself already in certain ways so distinctly as to make it a matter for Christian instruction. There needs to be instruction respecting it throughout the length and breadth of this land, there is such a vast range of it, present and prospective. For, without doubt, a mighty stream shall overflow our banks, and the country shall extend from the Pacific to the Atlantic, and from the extreme North to the extreme South. And with such diversity of climate, and such diversity of resources, it is better fitted by its conditions for intercommunion and reciprocity than almost any other country. And yet, if men mistake, and are narrow-minded, there will spring up sectional selfishness, and sectional conflicts.

Now, the prosperity of the whole nation is a benefit to every several part of the nation. You cannot make the entire people wise, intelligent, skillful, strong, brave and prosperous, and not

make every section of the nation, whether east, west, north or south, more intelligent, more skillful, stronger, better, and wiser. Old New England, when she thinks for herself, cannot think for herself. She thinks for every thing that there is on the continent. Whatever wise law she makes reverberates to the very Pacific. Whatever noble example her sons set, shines throughout all the land. She cannot act for herself: she acts for the whole. Whatever is done wisely and well in one part, is a benefit to all the parts. To build up the West at the expense of the East, is to build it up at the expense of the West, by and by. And so of the East. When you attempt to fortify any section at the expense of any other section, you cheat yourself. That which is best for all, will, in the long run, be found to be best for each section. Though it may not seem so, yet in the end it will be found to have been so.

This is a principle that is radical to our national existence. This is a feeling that should be cultivated more and more. It should be cultivated more in the family, and it should be cultivated more in the church. The church, like the family, can speak and act disinterestedly. Parties, often, are tongue-tied in these things. Commerce, while it is generous in many respects, is apt to be narrow and selfish in this matter. And it is for us to see that this law holds good in sections of the nation.

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the the things of others."

New England, in legislating for the Atlantic slope, must not think of the Atlantic slope alone. The Southern States must not legislate and work for the Southern States. The West must take care of the West; but in taking care of the West she must so take care of it that others shall be cared for.

"Say to the South—Give up thy charge,
And keep not back, O North."

Let all stand together, a vast, outspread domain of free and intelligent men, inspired by the true Christian spirit of indomitable self-care and independence; and then let there be a prolific, widespread public care and thought for the commonwealth.

4. The life of nations proceeds upon modifications of the same great laws which govern individuals. It takes a long time to work out results in national life, because it is so much more multitudinous than any individual or family life. But at length precisely the same moral laws and economic laws which govern on the great scale, must govern on the individual scale. Nations, I think, are to treat each other as individuals treat each other. Precisely the same law of obligation is binding upon nations that is binding upon individuals. Let each one take care of himself; but let him do it so as all the

time to accumulate strength by which to extend something of sympathy and help to those around about. The law of nations should be a law of interaction and service.

How well they pick their banners! Our banner—what is it? The ugliest bird of prey that flies in the air. We have, to signify our moral qualities, rapacity built on power. The nation from which we descended have for their banner, on a bloody field, a rampant lion—the ugliest beast of the forest, that steals between day and night to eat all that is not too strong for him. Other nations have double-headed eagles, and others thistles. It is sought to express the aptitudes of nations by some animal of forceful, cruel, rapacious instinct or aptitude!

National life should be benevolent life. And there is a sympathetic impulse growing up in nations one toward another. The whole round world is coming nearer to every part of itself. Each part is coming nearer to every other part. The long voyages which once separated us have ceased. Knowledge is traveling faster than once it did. There is intercommunion by electric wires which run round the globe. So that we are near neighbors; and the earth is hardly larger than the page of a book as compared with what it was a hundred years ago. And this law, which we could scarcely feel when we were so widely separated, now, within hardly a lifetime, has come to be felt. Organizations are so complete, and intercommunication is so rapid, that we are obliged to think, and the strong nations of the earth must ere long think, what is to become of the weak nations.

Because you are built up by Christianity, have you a right to be more savage than heathenism? Because your industry needs the help of Oriental nations, have you a right to tread them out? Have they no rights which you are bound to respect, because God has made you more strong and prosperous than they? Where came this prosperity and this strength that is made the argument of oppression?

By as much as we are superior to the weak nations around us, by so much we owe to them our sympathy and aid. It is a poor employment of civilization that makes men more severe, more cruel, more destroying. And yet, where does the edge of a civilized nation touch upon a poor people—some Indian tribe, or some uneducated nation—that it does not corrode?

Nations are first to secure their own autonomy, and then they are, in their prosperity, to reach out kindly hands, and extend prosperity to those around about them. For, as in a neighborhood, the prosperity of the family depends upon the general prosperity; as in

a nation the prosperity of each section depends upon the prosperity of the whole commonwealth; so the prosperity of each nation on the globe depends in part upon the prosperity of the nations which surround it. That spirit by which we seek to build ourselves up by pulling down another nation; that spirit of fierce rivalry which means destruction to the weaker party, is contrary to the Gospel spirit and to political economy.

When the time comes that nations shall make war no more; when the time comes that men shall regard their neighbors, not as natural enemies, but as brethren; when the time comes that the whole population of society is free and intelligent; when the man of the loom, and the man of the plow, and the man of the hammer and the ax and the saw, shall have an interest in the public welfare and policy; when the common people shall speak, and not dynasties, and not narrow classes—then we may believe that nations will be reluctant to go to war against nations; and that wealth, like a kindly stream of sympathy will flow like a river of God through the earth, and that men will rejoice to build up all their fellow-men, differently named though they be, though they speak different languages, and though they be far from them.

And this time is drawing nearer and nearer. The providence of God is pointing and traveling in that direction. Even in my lifetime a new leaf has been turned over. Once nations fought, and neighboring nations stood and looked on, and were as little affected as brutal gamblers are while standing and looking on at a cock-fight or a bull-fight. But nations have changed in that regard. A new feeling is at work in the affairs of men. There is a better and a diviner feeling moving among nations. All nations are beginning to pity nations that are in distress. Do we hear that even in China there is starvation? Though they are so far away, our heart begins to move toward that nation. Do we hear that in any distant part of the earth some huge famine, some terrific pestilence, some devastating freshet has swept whole neighborhoods into poverty and misery? Succor begins to flow first from those nearest, and then from those more remote, in due order. Among the hitherward nations—those with whom we are more in contiguity, and whose sympathy is with ours—kindly offices have ceased to be exceptional things. When Ireland hungered, America fed her, as did Great Britain, on the other side of the water. When Europe, in any of her members, suffers, all the rest of Europe is attent, and listens to the cry that comes up from the suffering.

To-day, what do we behold? Fifty years ago, and a little more, that great, proud, ruthless and unprincipled hero, Napoleon, brought

down on the Germans famine, poverty and suffering, at Berlin; and to-day, in consonance with that retribution which goes with nations as with individuals, William stands treading down France, sovereign, imperial; and all his path smokes. The fires ascend from hamlets and from villages. And now, again, as in all the rest of the history of the world, the great men commit the crimes, and the innocent suffer the penalties. Not they that legislate ambitiously are the sufferers. Not they that carry on the war, but the peasant, the helpless mother and wife, the little children, go without bread and go with tattered raiment, and die in the very heart of beautiful France. Hollow-hearted corruption has sat on the throne and warred with Germany.

I adjudicate in the case of neither of these nations; but if one year ago I had been asked to point to that nation whose resources seemed to be the most ample, and whose prosperity seemed to be without let or hindrance, I should have said, "France is the strongest—the most militarily strong, at any rate;" and God lifted his hand and smote her, and behold in an hour she is desolate. She is absolutely sitting as the "Daughter of Zion," upon the ground disheveled, in ashes, and in utter and abject humiliation. The shears are already cutting off her territorial kingdom on the east. Already the tax-gatherer is collecting her wealth. Already famine stalks through her cities and villages. Her great men are scattered. Her citizens are despoiled and wretched. There has not been, in your age nor in mine, nor within a hundred years, a spectacle of such abject suffering, brought upon so large a people, as that which has come with this tornado of war.

Do I blame Germany? I do not. She, too, is a sufferer. There is mourning in all her houses. Multitudes of her sons go back no more. Many a book has been shut for the last time by scholarly hands in Germany. Many a one that was drawing God's secrets from among the stars will never look through glass again. Her universities are emptied. Her noblest sons have spilled their blood, as our noblest sons spilled theirs in our late struggle, and have met the same fate, the divine beneficence of which God shall by and by reveal to us. But though, in resisting the imperious and unjust aggressions of France, she suffers; yet, as the scene of the conflict is on the fields of France, she does not suffer as France now suffers. Her wounded are in beautiful cities. Her granaries are full. Her treasury is full. Her resources are organized. Her government is competent to take care of its people. Every drop of our old Germanic blood cries out, "God bless our father-land!"

But there is a voice of pity and of sorrow that cries out, "God

spare and have compassion upon poor France." The prairies lifted up their hands all summer, and the corn grew, and we knew not what it meant. But now we know that it was designed to be an instrument of charity, as we see it make haste to depart and travel across the deep to feed starving mouths. Our orchards and our wheat-fields yielded abundant harvests last year. Our anvils and mills sped prosperously last year. We are strong. Our hands are full. And that is not all—we are charitable.

And France—she is bone of our bone, and blood of our blood. On many a southward field sleep heroes born on French soil, who laid down their lives to achieve our independence. The name of Lafayette is sacred. It is second to no other than that of Washington itself. We are bound to France by the ties which bind all nations one to another. We are bound to France by that great law of humanity, which forbids that we see suffering without making haste to relieve it. We are bound to France by the memory of the services which she rendered to us in the hour of our extremest need. She heard our birth-cry; she took us up when we were weak and helpless; she cleansed us; she clothed us; she suckled us. And now that we have grown strong, and she is crippled and decrepit, shall we hear her voice imploring, "Come over and help me!" and not heed it? No. We have the spirit of men and brethren, and our willing hands shall give a response to this cry.

I have so made the sermon this morning that I might bring it out to this issue and result. I have been requested, as all the clergymen of Brooklyn have, to call attention to the want of France, to make mention of her perishing condition, in order to take up a collection that should be sent as a testimony of our sympathy and our beneficence over the sea.

You, that never heard a cry of suffering in vain; you, that in old days, when your names were a by-word and a hissing at the South, sent your hundreds and thousands of dollars to relieve the distressed in Norfolk; you that sent your gold to the people of New Orleans at a time when they despised you, and when your name was opprobrious—shall you be wanting, in this day, and in a more welcome service? Your old generosity I believe has not grown decrepit; and I believe that you will make a contribution now, I will not say that is worthy of your name (that would be presenting a low motive), but that is worthy of our humanity, of our Christian sympathy, and of our sense of that obligation which one nation owes to another.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, O Lord our God! that through the pathless way, untrod, without mark, thou hast so often taken us that we are familiar with the road. We know not where thou art, as men judge; we know not what thou art. In part we know thee insomuch as we have something of our Father in us, and the child that is in us cries out unto thee; and yet, thou art so much more than that, and hast so much in thyself that transcends all conception, that by searching we never can find thee out. But by thy power thou seemest to us as one near and well known. And thy love and thy grace have made us love thee again. We do not send our thoughts as flowers send their fragrance into the air that comes not back unto them. We do not send our thoughts out to wander. We commune—yea, without voice, without answer; and yet we have learned to feel that thou art near to us, and that we are near to thee. There is something that thinks of us; something that enfolds us—though not by an arm such as that with which we enfold one another. Thine arm is creation. Thy thought is Providence. Thy heart is love. How does it give to us atmosphere and light and warmth! And because thou art greater, we lose thee. Because we seek to reduce thee to the proportion of our own form, and to the exigencies of our narrowed and confined life, we do not realize how present thou art. How necessary to us is thy very life! For in thee we live and move and have our being. We thank thee that we have learned so much. Not only when we are in distress do we call unto thee; not only when all our own strength and skill fail, do we send forth a vague cry for help; but in the watches of the night, and in the solitary times of the day—in the hours when the earth cannot satisfy us, and in the hours when it does satisfy us. In times of joy; in times of gratitude; in all times of peace and hope; in all times of pain and sorrow, thou art needed by us; and we feel after thee, and find thee. Sometimes thou art seemingly away; sometimes thou seemest to hide; but yet we are in thy pavilion. The storm passes, and we hear its terrible steps; and yet there we are protected, and safe, and brought forth again into light. And we have learned to hide our life with Christ in God. And we dwell not unconscious of our unworthiness. Yea, we grow more and more conscious of our unworthiness as we grow in days and years. We have learned to experience a sweet companionship with thee; and we rejoice in thy ineffable grace. We commit ourselves, dear Father, to thy paternal care to-day. We need not confess our sin. We open our life before thee; and thou readest it. Even as outward things are discerned by the stars of the darkest night, so thou discernest the most hidden things by the light that is in thee, and not in them. And we rejoice that thou knowest us altogether. Thou wilt not therefore be surprised at fresh transgressions; at the outbreaking of sin. Thou hast taken us with a knowledge of our weakness, and with a full knowledge of our wickedness; and thou knowest how we shall be tempted, and how we shall fall. All things are naked and open before Him with whom we have to do. And so thou hast set thy seal upon that blessed exhortation, Come thou boldly unto the throne of grace, that thou mayest obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. We need thee to-day. We need thee in our understandings. We need thee in our affections. We need thee in all the parts and passages of our life. We need thee at home. We need thee by the wayside. We need thee in solitude, and in thick companies. We need thee in the sanctuary. We need thee in the perplexities of our daily business, and in our temptations. We need thee when we are ill at ease. We need thee waking or sleeping. Everywhere we need thee, O, thou Spirit of love, and of providence, and of care! And we commit ourselves now to thine hands, without condition. We run to thee as children run to us, not stopping to ask why, but

drawn. And we rejoice that thou wilt not put any away, nor let them count their worth. Thou wilt measure thy kindnesses according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, and not according to their deserts.

And now, we pray that thou wilt draw to thyself, by thy love and goodness, those that have been so far from thee, and that are so far from thee. Awaken a new life in all that are in darkness. Give a heavenly life to those who have been ministered unto thus far by earthly influences. We pray that there may be many that shall heartily renounce their sins and overcome them. And may many break forth into songs. And may their voices be as the voice of spring. May we hear the sound of birds that sing once more, saying, Spring hath come again. May we hear vocal joy on every hand. May we hear from those who pray in silence and in secret. May we hear from those who pray in their households. May we hear from those who gather together, two or three in thy name. May they have thee in their midst. May we hear from those who go forth to teach the poor, and to relieve the suffering, and to minister to the sick and to the dying. Grant, O Lord our God! that they may be filled with the Holy Ghost. May they bear the very spirit of their Master with them. May they go forth even with tears, sowing seed in strange places; and may they come continually with joy, having their bosom filled with sheaves! May all this Church be a Church of ministering spirits. May it have in each one a servant faithful in his sphere. May we be up and doing the things which our hands find to do, watching and waiting for the coming of Christ. We know not when he will come—whether at morning, at noon, at night, or at midnight. Therefore may we always be ready, having our harness on. May we be found working whenever the Master shall come. We pray that thou wilt bless the poor, and comfort them in their straightened circumstances. Open the hearts of those around about them, to give them sympathy and succor. And we pray for all that are rich, that they may not put their heart in their riches, nor grow vain nor proud, nor avaricious. May they be rich in good works.

We pray for all those that are in the perplexities and trials of business. Give them a happy issue from their trouble, and overrule all things in thy providence for their spiritual as well as their temporal good.

Bless the young. May they make for themselves the highest conception of manhood; and may they seek, with noble ardor, to be better, more strong, and more fruitful in good than those who have gone before them.

And we pray for the old. As their feet are beginning to tread less and less strongly, and as they are coming near to the borders of this land, may they find that they are drawing near to the borders of the other land of hope and truth and immortality.

We pray, O God! that thou wilt bless the sick, and be with them this day, in their chambers. Bear to them the music and the prayer and all the service of devotion in the sanctuary, by thy Spirit. May they sing in heart; and may they find their way toward God. Prepare those who are appointed unto death for a sweet deliverance from care and trouble, and for a joyful entrance into thy heavenly kingdom.

And we pray for all this land. We pray that thou wilt grant that education may go forth everywhere, preparing the way for the Gospel. And everywhere may the Gospel raise men in intelligence, and in true knowledge, and in virtue, and in piety.

Bless the nations of the earth; and grant, we pray thee, that speedily they may be lifted up so high that men shall not be able any longer to oppress men. And grant that truth, knowledge and manhood may become so strong that the nations shall secure peace in the fear of God. And we pray that wars and famine and pestilence may be things of the past. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Hast thou not promised? Wilt thou not perform? Thou that hast administered from age to age as if the life of man were a very little thing with thee, oh! delay not too long, hide not the counsels of thy mercies too long, lest the hearts of men grow weary with waiting. Come, O, thou Prince of peace! O, thou that bringest joyful tidings!—come, and command the nations that they rest, and give occasion to none to say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord? May all know thee from the greatest unto the least. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

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